NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

BUDGET ESTIMATES

FISCAL YEAR 2006

PRIVILEGED

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CONGRESSIONAL SUBMISSION

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
OPERATIONS RESEARCH AND FACILITIES
FY 2006 OVERVIEW

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL DATA
($ in thousands)

Operations Research and Facilities	FY 2004 ACTUALS	FY 2005 CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	FY 2006 BASE PROGRAM	FY 2006 ESTIMATE	INCREASE / DECREASE
Protected Species Research and Management	145,118	175,530	131,491	159,273	27,782
Fisheries Research and Management	285,443	297,873	280,355	294,000	13,645
Enforcement and Observers / Training	71,187	70,347	72,267	80,163	7,896
Habitat Conservation & Restoration	41,221	53,248	36,135	34,096	-2,039
Other Activities Supporting Fisheries	78,372	79,517	52,048	57,932	5,884
TOTAL	621,341	676,515	572,296	625,464	53,168
FTE	2,790	2,609	2,552	2,587	35

For FY 2006, NOAA requests an increase of $53,168,000 and 35 FTEs for a total of $625,464,000 for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Operations, Research and Facilities account.

Strategic Goal: Protect, Restore, and Manage the Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources Through an Ecosystem Approach to Management:

NOAA is responsible, in partnership with other Federal agencies and state and local governments, for managing, the Nation's coastal zone and protected areas; planning for, mitigating, and responding to hazardous events; restoring degraded habitats; protecting ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources; ensuring wise and appropriate use of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources; and providing advice, technical tools, information, and training to coastal residents, communities, and other decision makers and users of oceans, coastal, and Great Lakes areas.

NOAA is responsible for protecting, restoring, and managing species listed under the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act, as well as their habitats.

NOAA is responsible for managing and rebuilding fish species to population levels that will support economically viable and sustainable harvest opportunities.

To accomplish these three longer-term objectives, NOAA will invest in improved understanding of ecosystems, identification of regional ecosystems, development of ecosystem health indicators, and new methods of governance to establish the necessary knowledge, tools, and capabilities to fully implement an ecosystem approach to management of coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes resources. The following are strategies for implementing the Ecosystem goal's objectives:

- Increased number of ecosystems where ecological functions and linkage to human activities and impacts are adequately understood for management purposes.
- Increased number of models linking climate/weather/atmosphere with ecosystem/hydrology made operational to assess and predict natural and human-induced changes in the ocean and coastal environment.
- Increased number of coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes areas (including coastal watersheds) with Federal, state, and local governments or nongovernmental management plans using ecosystem best management practices and approaches.

NMFS Mission Overview:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is responsible for the management and conservation of living marine resources within the United States' Exclusive Economic Zone. NMFS also provides critical support, scientific and policy leadership in the international arena, and plays a key role in the management of living marine resources in coastal areas under state jurisdiction. NMFS implements international agreements on conservation and management measures through science-based conservation and management actions that are aimed at sustaining long-term use and promoting the health of coastal and marine ecosystems. As a result, benefits to the Nation from the use of living marine resources are maximized. Programmatic authority for fisheries management, species protection, and habitat conservation activities are derived primarily from the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA), the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Other acts provide additional authority for enforcement, seafood safety, habitat restoration, and cooperative efforts with states, interstate fish commissions, and other countries. All of these activities rely on a strong scientific and research competency to support the challenging public policy decision process associated with NMFS' stewardship responsibility.

Work is conducted by NMFS field elements with oversight, review, and direction by NMFS headquarters in Silver Spring, MD. The field structure consists of six Regional Offices, each with a Science Center that conducts research and directs the work carried out by the other laboratories and satellite/special purpose facilities in that region. Major NMFS facilities are located at the following sites:

Northeast: Regional Office - Gloucester, MA
Science Center - Woods Hole, MA
Major Laboratories - Milford, CT; Narragansett, RI; J.J. Howard, Sandy Hook, NJ
Satellite/Special Purpose Facilities - Smithsonian (National Systematics Lab), Washington, DC

Southeast:	Regional Office - St. Petersburg, FL Science Center - Miami, FL Major Laboratories - Beaufort, NC; Galveston, TX; Panama City, FL; Pascagoula, MS Satellite/Special Purpose Facilities - Stennis Space Center (Bay St. Louis, MS)
Southwest:	Regional Office - Long Beach, CA Science Center - La Jolla, CA Major Laboratories - Santa Cruz, CA Satellite/Special Purpose Facilities - Pacific Grove, CA
Northwest:	Regional Office - Seattle, WA at Sand Point Science Center - Seattle, WA at Montlake Satellite/Special Purpose Facilities - Manchester, WA; Mukilteo, WA; Pasco, WA; Newport, OR; Hammond, OR
Alaska:	Regional Office - Juneau, AK Science Center - Seattle, WA at Sand Point Major Laboratories - Auke Bay, AK; Kodiak, AK Satellite/Special Purpose Facilities - Little Port Walter, AK
Pacific Islands:	Regional Office – Honolulu, HI Science Center – Honolulu, HI

Significant Adjustments to Base:

NOAA requests an increase of $21,840,000 and an increase of 0 FTEs to cover full year costs of positions financed for part of the year in FY 2005. The increase will fund the estimated FY 2006 Federal pay raise of 2.3 percent and annualize the FY 2005 pay raise of 3.5 percent. The increase will also provide inflationary increases for non-labor activities, including service contracts, utilities, field office lease payments, and rent charges from the General Service Administration. Finally, this increase will restore rescissions taken in the FY 2005 appropriation.

In addition to the adjustments above, NMFS requests the following transfers between line offices for a net change to NOAA of zero.

From Office	Line	To Office	Line	Amount
NMFS	Fisheries Research and Management Services, Conservation and Management Base	Under Secretary and Associate Offices	General Counsel	-60 FTE and -$1,035,000
PS	Facilities	NMFS	NMFS Facilities Maintenance	$4,000,000

The $4,000,000 transferred to NMFS will fund various maintenance activities and maintenance personnel. These costs have traditionally been funded within the NMFS budget.

Subactivity: Protected Species Research and Management
Line Item: Protected Species

GOAL STATEMENT:

Provide accurate and timely information and analyses for the conservation of the Nation's living marine resources to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Strategic Plan Goal of an Ecosystem Approach to Management. Implement and monitor living marine resource management measures to recover protected species in support of NOAA's Strategic Plan Goal of Ecosystem Approaches to Management. The ultimate desired outcome is to recover and sustain all protected species (i.e., all ESA listed species, all endangered and threatened species, all marine mammal populations) to be fully functioning components of their ecosystems. The Protected Species Management Program (PSM) administers the conservation and management activities that support this outcome. The Ecosystem Observations Program (EOP) and Ecosystem Research Program (ERP) support the PSM by providing the monitoring, assessment, and management directed research needed for management.

BASE DESCRIPTION:

Base activities support the objective, "Enhance the conservation and management of coastal and marine resources to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs" under the Department of Commerce Strategic Goal of "Observe, protect, and manage the Earth's resources to promote environmental stewardship."

Protected Species Science
Protected Species Science is administered by the EOP and ERP conducted by NMFS Science Centers. The EOP is responsible for surveys and assessment, while the ERP is responsible for management directed research. Activities consist of scientific investigation and research for the science-based protection, recovery, and conservation of protected living marine resources, including understanding the dynamics of protected living marine resources within their ecosystems and the environment. NMFS specifically investigates the status of protected species populations and the potential impacts of human activities (e.g., commercial fishing, commercial and military shipping, hydro-electric dams and power plants, polluted effluents, ocean dumping, dredging, and logging) on protected species.

Protected species science focuses on three main areas: protected species surveys, protected species assessments, and protected species management directed research. Protected species surveys involve the systematic gathering of information on species including their regional densities and overall abundance, their seasonal distributions and movements, and sources of human related mortality and serious injury. Protected species assessments utilize surveys and other information to develop "status of stocks" assessments in the short term, and over the long term utilize time series of those assessments and predictive statistical modeling methods to forecast protected species population trends in the context of conservation actions and natural environmental factors. Management directed research focuses on specific questions concerning the effects of human activities on protected species and the resources on which they depend. This research can include more detailed information on habitat use, spatial and temporal distributions, and biological, behavioral, and environmental related effects.

Protected Species Surveys - NMFS utilizes vessel, aircraft, and remote sensing platforms to obtain fundamental information to support protected species management. Systematic statistically based surveys collect information on the seasonal distribution of, and habitat types utilized by, protected species. Additional information collected in conjunction with surveys related to life history (e.g., growth rates, sex and age structure of the population, age of sexual maturity, age-specific birth and death rates, and longevity) allow scientists to assess the status of protected species population more completely than can be accomplished from abundance and trend information alone. In recent years, newly developed passive acoustic detection methods have demonstrated the potential for significantly augmenting traditional visual based surveys by allowing the expansion of surveys in time and space, during conditions of poor visibility, and during nighttime. Autonomous sensing devices (e.g., acoustic recorders) allow the cost effective detection of protected species in habitats and areas previously not suitable for traditional surveys (e.g., polar seas and open ocean during winter) and at minimal risk to human safety. Acoustic monitoring also gathers information on the sources and intensities of ocean noise to which protected species are exposed in the regions they inhabit. Bio-molecular genetics and modern approaches to stock identification and stock structure provide data necessary to distinguish population stocks and/or management units of protected species in support of appropriate and prudent listing determinations.

Protected Species Assessments - Status of stocks assessments and analyses of population trends over time provide the biological basis for management actions to effectively recover and conserve protected species and minimize the impacts of human activities under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). NMFS is responsible for undertaking timely assessments of the listed species protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the ESA. Those that are depleted must be assessed annually, while ESA listed species must be assessed at five-year intervals. Non-listed species must be assessed at regular intervals to track their population trends. Assessments inform management on the status of protected species populations, and the effects of regulatory actions (e.g., seasonal area closures, bycatch reduction measures, limiting ocean noise sources) designed to mitigate potentially harmful activities and to improve the status of protected species.

Protected Species Management Directed Research - Protected species management faces numerous emerging issues that affect the recovery and well being of protected species, and require scientifically based information to develop meaningful mitigation and regulatory actions. Such issues include, but are not limited to, reducing bycatch in commercial fisheries, reducing the threat of commercial shipping vessel collisions with large whales, and evaluating the effects of anthropogenic ocean noise on protected species. These programs expand and implement novel research and analyses to: (1) identify and quantify the effects of anthropogenic and natural factors on protected species populations and the variability of these effects over time and space; (2) identify and evaluate options for management tools to be used in a wide variety of issues relating to protected species management; and (3) conduct ecosystem and habitat research (e.g., environmental change, food requirements, habitat requirements) to support an ecosystem approach to Protected Species Management.

Protected Species Conservation and Management

Protected Species Conservation and Management activities are administered by NOAA's PSM program. The PSM program is responsible for protecting species through the implementation of the ESA, MMPA and other statutes and international treaties and conventions. The PSM program shares this responsibility with the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service. In general, the Department of the Interior is responsible for the conservation of terrestrial and aquatic (freshwater) organisms and NOAA is responsible for conservation of living marine resources, which include most marine mammals, many species of fish (both commercially valuable and non-harvested species), turtles at sea and species of marine invertebrates and plant life.

The PSM program is charged with three main tasks: pursuing proactive conservation efforts, formal listing of the species in need of protection, and recovery and conservation of species once they are listed. Proactive conservation efforts are aimed at helping species that are approaching the need for listing under the ESA and MMPA. Species in this category have been named "species of concern" or "candidate species." Proactive conservation can be much more cost-effective than recovering a population once it is listed, as the prescriptive nature of the ESA and MMPA are costly. Once a species has become threatened or endangered under the ESA, the PSM program is responsible for formal listing of the species and designation of critical habitat under the ESA. Under the MMPA, the PSM program is responsible for identifying what species are depleted. One hundred and fifty seven marine mammal stocks are currently identified under the MMPA, of which 4 are depleted. Under the ESA, 52 domestic marine species are listed (1 invertebrate (white abalone), 1 seagrass, 1 sawfish, 6 sea turtles, 1 Atlantic salmon, 26 Pacific salmon, 2 sturgeon, 9 whales, and 5 seals). After the formal listing process is completed, the bulk of the program's work is on conservation and recovery. This involves management and planning to remove or minimize human impacts and provide for population increase to functional levels, much of it in concert with federal, state, tribal, local, international and private partners. The PSM Program also coordinates Outreach and Education, and International activities related to protected species. These activities cut across all parts of the PSM program from proactive efforts to recovery.

The PSM program's Recovery and Conservation capability can be further divided into specific program activities: Recovery planning and implementation, partnerships with states, tribes, and local entities; federal agency consultations; marine mammal health and stranding response; fishery interactions; and permitting and take authorizations.

Recovery Planning and Implementation – ESA recovery plans and Marine Mammal Conservation plans are currently being developed or updated for all listed species or those marine mammals designated as depleted. Many marine mammal and sea turtle plans are outdated and in need of revision. NMFS recently developed guidance for recovery planning efforts to ensure that all recovery plans meet the requirements of the ESA. Recovery plans are key to informing management decisions under section 7 of the ESA and for analyzing the effects of scientific research and enhancement permits. As recovery plans are completed, NMFS works with Federal, state, and local agencies and the public to implement recovery actions.

Partnerships with States, Tribes, and Local Entities – The PSM program is administering agreements with states through section 6 of the ESA and providing limited funding to implement conservation actions. NMFS has also entered into agreements with West Coast states and Tribes to implement the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) for Pacific salmon recovery activities. The PSM program administers the

PCSRF, including coordination on the development of performance measures and completion of an annual report to Congress on activities completed with the fund. Under the MMPA, the PSM program has entered into agreements with Alaska Native groups regarding the management of harvested marine mammal stocks in Alaska. These cooperative agreements provide funding to Alaska native groups for cooperative management. The PSM program also works to develop Habitat Conservation Plans under the ESA with non-Federal entities wishing to receive permission to incidentally take listed species as part of otherwise lawful activities. Currently these efforts are focused on Pacific salmon, but are being expanded to other species.

Federal Agency Consultations – ESA Section 7 consultations are the area that requires the greatest amount of resources in the PSM program. This activity consists of conducting section 7 consultation activities, as well as the training, quality control, and guidance development associated with consultations. The PSM program is required to complete consultation with action agencies under strict timeframes, and in the past has dealt with a backlog of consultations. These demands are especially high for consultations on the registration of Pesticdes and Clean Water Act criteria. The PSM program no longer has a backlog of consultations, but will require resources to keep up with an increased demand for consultation, as well as a need to improve the timing and quality of consultation. Improved timing and quality of consultations are essential to limit the legal risk for the agency and to decrease unnecessary social and economic impacts on the public. The PSM program has invested heavily in efficiency improvements through streamlining agreements and the use of programmatic consultations, these investments should continue into the future given current funding.

Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response – Through the Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response program, the PSM program coordinates response to stranding activities through a stranding network, funds the stranding network through the Prescott Grant program, administers a Marine Mammal Tissue Bank, and administers databases for tracking Marine Mammal tissue and stranding response activities.

Fishery Interactions – This activity implements the requirements to reduce the impact of commercial and recreational fisheries on protected species. This includes management of the NMFS Tuna/Dolphin program, the MMPA Fishery registration and authorization program, and MMPA take reduction planning efforts.

Permitting and Take Authorizations – This activity implements the requirement to issue permits related to both the direct and indirect take of listed species under sections 4(d) and 10 of the ESA and sections 101, 104, and 118 of the MMPA. This activity is currently experiencing an increase in the demand for permits and the increased demand has been accompanied by a need to improve the quality of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis related to the permitted actions. This affects the entire public, unlike ESA section 7 that applies only to Federal activities. Our ability to ensure timely public service with minimal disruption and risk of lawsuits depends on adequate permit processing and analytical resources.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

The Administration will work with Congress to reauthorize the Marine Mammal Protection Act, P.L. 103-238, and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), P.L. 100-478.

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL DATA

(Dollars in thousands)

Subactivity: Protected Species Research and Management	FY 2004 ACTUALS	FY 2005 CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	FY 2006 BASE PROGRAM	FY 2006 ESTIMATE	INCREASE / DECREASE
Line Item: Protected Species					
Protected Species Base	27,791	26,266	28,653	30,925	2,272
Atlantic Salmon	4,973	5,183	5,330	5,881	551
Pacific Salmon	44,122	45,170	47,041	66,591	19,550
Marine Turtles	12,070	14,943	9,700	9,700	-
Marine Mammals	53,696	81,504	38,023	38,023	-
Other Protected Species	2,466	2,464	2,744	8,153	5,409
TOTAL	145,118	175,530	131,491	159,273	27,782
FTE	646	646	646	657	11

PROGRAM CHANGES FOR FY 2006:

All increases will support the objective, "Enhance the conservation and management of coastal and marine resources to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs" under the Department of Commerce Strategic Goal of, "Observe, protect, and manage the Earth's resources to promote environmental stewardship."

Protected Species (Marine Mammals, Marine Turtles, and Other Protected Species) (7 FTE and +$2,272,000): NOAA requests an increase of $2,272,000 and 7 FTE for a total request of $30,925,000, for the Protected Species line item. This request includes three main components, as well as restoring funding requested in the FY 2005 President's budget that was not funded in the FY 2005 enacted budget.

NOAA requests $1,100,000 and 2 FTE to investigate Ocean Sound and its Effects on listed species – Rising levels of ocean sound and their potential effects on marine species, particularly on protected species, has become a significant emerging issue in marine conservation. Sources of ocean sound include natural events (e.g., earthquakes) and anthropogenic activities (e.g., seismic exploration, military sonars, and commercial shipping). Research on human and non-human species indicates that some levels of sound and chronic exposure to sound may affect health, reproduction, behavior, and survival. Recent strandings of marine mammals suggest there may be a relationship between some anthropogenic sound sources and these stranding events. Specific research will be directed at determining the characteristics of sound experienced by marine animals underwater, measuring the behavioral and auditory effects of exposure to ocean sound, and developing cost effective mitigation measures for ocean sound effects.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

The increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and GPRA measures, "Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered, or depleted with stable or increasing population levels." This adjustment will support research and provide information needed to develop cost effective measures to mitigate the effects of sound on protected species, thereby reducing one of the threats to protected species and allowing those species to stabilize or increase.

Performance Goal 3: Ecosystem	**FY 2006 without Increase**	**FY 2006 with Increase**
GPRA Measure: Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered, or depleted with stable or increasing population levels	22	22. This increase will impact this measure. While the contribution is not immediate, funding for research on the effects of marine sound will lead to improved species status in 2010, at the earliest.
Program output metric: Listed species with specific research directed at anthropogenic noise effects	1	6

NOAA requests a net increase of 5 FTE and $1,172,000 for Protected Resources Stock Assessments and Mortality Estimation and minimizing impacts and improving recovery planning and implementation for marine mammals and sea turtles. The net increase includes a reduction of $956,000 for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Species Management Program.

The net increase includes $1,000,000 for Protected Resources Stock Assessments and Mortality Estimation - Currently the quality of over 180 protected and at-risk marine species stock assessments are inadequate for management purposes. The request will increase the number and quality of stock surveys and assessments on which to base regulatory decisions. These assessments provide timely, reliable, and precise estimates of distribution, abundance, and mortality estimates for listed species. Imprecise estimates increase the probability that species will be misclassified under the ESA or MMPA; resulting in increased risk to the species, delay of recovery, and additional mitigation measures that pose significant economic losses to the regulated community. NMFS is required to evaluate the status of listed species annually for MMPA listings and every five years for ESA listings, and to reclassify the affected listing as appropriate following these status reviews.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

The increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and GPRA measure, "Number of Stocks of Protected Species with Adequate Population Assessments." The expansion of stock assessment resources will directly affect this measure by improving the quality and quantity of surveys and the resulting assessment documents.

Performance Goal 3: Ecosystem	**FY 2006 without Increase**	**FY 2006 with Increase**
GPRA Measure: Number of stocks of protected species with adequate population assessments	65	65. The proposed increase will impact this measure. While the contribution is not immediate, it will increase the number of "adequate" assessments by 10 for FY 2007.

A total increase of $1,128,000 will be used for Minimizing impacts and improving recovery planning and implementation for marine mammals and sea turtles – To achieve recovery requirements under the Endangered Species Act, NMFS must perform ESA section 7 consultations, programmatic NEPA reviews for ESA and MMPA permitting, mandatory ESA five-year status reviews, as well as work to reduce fishery interactions and continue recovery planning and recovery implementation for marine mammals and sea turtles. Increased funding will allow the PSM program to "frontload" protected species issues into other management actions, feeding into a regional ecosystem management governance structure. Part of the increase will be used to develop and implement recovery actions. This funding will allow NMFS to complete plans for species that currently lack them, and fund some of the highest priority actions needed to prevent extinction and start them on the road to recovery. Recovery planning efforts will include comprehensive analyses of current threats. These analyses will guide NMFS' actions to reduce take and conserve listed species. This increase will fund a portion of the FY 2005 Congressionally enacted Marine Mammal Initiative to continue marine mammal permitting, take reduction planning, and recovery planning and implementation.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

The increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and GPRA measures, "Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered or depleted with stable or increasing population levels," "Number of species with known impacts from fisheries for which mortalities have been reduced to acceptable levels," and "Number of species designated as endangered, threatened, depleted, or strategic stocks for which recovery, conservation, and take reduction plans are in place." The increase will fund the development of take reduction plans for marine mammals that will reduce fishery interactions. Reduced fishery interactions coupled with improved ESA section 7 consultation and permitting will ultimately lead to stable or increasing populations of protected species.

Performance Goal 3: Ecosystem	FY 2006 without Increase	FY 2006 with Increase
GPRA Measure: Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered or depleted with stable or increasing population levels	22	22. The proposed increase will impact this measure. While the contribution is not immediate, the increase will help stabilize and increase populations, and lead to improvements in the measure beginning in FY 2009.
GPRA Measure: Number of species with known impacts from fisheries for which mortalities have been reduced to acceptable levels	118	118. The proposed increase will impact this measure. While the contribution is not immediate, the increase will lead to one additional species with fishery mortality reduced to an acceptable level in FY 2006.
GPRA Measure: Number of species designated as endangered, threatened, depleted, or strategic stocks for which recovery, conservation, and take reduction plans are in place	46	46. The proposed increase will impact this measure. While the contribution is not immediate, the increase will lead to one additional take reduction plan developed in FY 2007.
Program output metric: Number of ESA section 7 audits conducted	0	7
Program output metric: Number of ESA/MMPA permit NEPA documents completed	41	58
Program output metric: Number of Take Reduction Plans completed	1	1. The proposed increase will impact this measure. While the contribution is not immediate, the increase will lead to one additional take reduction plan developed in FY 2007.

Other Protected Species (Marine Fish, Plants, and Invertebrates) (4 FTE and + $5,409,000): NOAA requests an increase of $5,409,000 and 4 FTE for a total of $8,153,000 for Other Protected Species (Marine Fish, Plants, and Invertebrates). $2,609,000 of this funding is requested as base restoration from FY 2005. This increase will provide funding for proactive conservation efforts, as well as restore funding requested in the FY 2005 President's budget that was not funded in the FY 2005 enacted budget. The funding is critical to recovering those NMFS ESA listed species that do not have a separate program, as well as managing national programs related to marine acoustics, marine mammal health, and international species conservation efforts. Activities supported by this funding include completion of ESA section 7 consultations and implementing recovery programs for shortnose sturgeon, Gulf sturgeon, white abalone, Johnson's seagrass, and smalltooth sawfish.

NOAA requests 4 FTE and $2,300,000 for Proactive Conservation Efforts for Species – These funds will be used to initiate pilot proactive conservation efforts for species nearing the need for listing under the ESA. This pilot program will focus on reducing the risk of extinction for two species by reducing threats to the species through on-the-ground conservation actions or development of management agreements. This measure will result in cost

savings by preventing an ESA listing and thus not having to complete the ESA consultation and permitting requirements for species. On average, NOAA spends approximately $5 million per year on fulfilling consultations and permitting requirements for each listed species. The pilot project will also develop a performance measurement system for the program to determine the success of proactive conservation efforts.

An increase of $500,000 for Minimizing Impacts and Improving Recovery Planning and Implementation will be used to achieve recovery requirements under the endangered species act. NMFS must perform ESA section 7 consultations, programmatic NEPA reviews for ESA and MMPA permitting, mandatory ESA five-year status reviews, as-well-as work to reduce fishery interactions and continue recovery planning and recovery implementation for t listed marine fish (other than salmon) and marine plants.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

The increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and GPRA measure, "Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered or depleted with stable or increasing population levels." If this proactive conservation pilot is successful, there will be a mechanism in place to prevent species from being listed under the ESA, therefore preventing the baseline number of listed species from increasing.

Performance Goal 3: Ecosystem	**FY 2006 without Increase**	**FY 2006 with Increase**
GPRA Measure: Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered or depleted with stable or increasing population levels	22	22. The proposed increase will impact this measure. While the contribution is not immediate, the increase will prevent the baseline number of listed species (52) from increasing by 2 species from FY 2007 to FY 2010.
Program output metric: Number of proactive species conservation efforts conducted (grants released)	0	20
Program output metric: Number of species affected with proactive conservation efforts (cumulative)	0	2

Atlantic Salmon (0 FTE and +$551,000): An increase of $551,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $5,881,000 is requested for Atlantic salmon. This request will be used for implementation of the Atlantic salmon recovery plan including research and management activities within NMFS.

Pacific Salmon (0 FTE and +$19,550,000): NOAA requests an increase of $19,550,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $66,591,000, for Pacific salmon. This request includes four components.

NOAA requests $6,262,000 for Pacific Salmon Risk Management and Science support – This increase will restore base funding to the FY 2005 requested level. Funds will be used for ESA status reviews and listings, critical habitat designation, recovery planning, Section 7 consultations, and Habitat Conservation Planning. Efforts also include funding for research and technical support for analysis on factors affecting survival of at-risk salmon, envaluating on-going conservation and habitat restoration efforts, and cumulative risk assessments.

NOAA requests $200,000 for Minimizing Impacts to Pacific salmon – This increase will be used to improve the development of Habitat Conservation Plans for Pacific salmon.

NOAA requests $2,000,000 for Section 7 Consultations - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Pesticide Court Decision Workload – This increase will be used for necessary costs to meet court-ordered time lines to conduct ESA section 7 consultations with EPA. These consultations are required by rulings on pesticide lawsuits in California, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington State. Other lawsuits are pending. NMFS can generally complete a draft biological opinion of average complexity in 135 days. Because pesticide consultations are relatively new, and often very complex, NMFS estimates that initial development of draft biological opinions on pesticides may take significantly longer. NMFS and EPA are conducting a pilot consultation to test EPA's risk assessment methodology, which is the foundation of the new EPA Section 7 Counterpart Regulations. Currently, NMFS is in receipt of over 500 requests for consultation from EPA on approximately 40 pesticides subject to the aforementioned litigation. Annually, NMFS anticipates reviewing at least 100 pesticides for EPA, per standard Section 7 procedures, the Counterpart Regulations, and other general technical assistance. Where appropriate, NMFS concurrence on actions that are not likely to adversely affect ESA listed species and designated critical habitat will be incorporated into biological opinions with other pesticides to avoid development of additional consultation documents.

The pesticide consultation workload represents a significant increase to NMFS. Pesticide consultations are extremely complex and require specialized technical expertise (e.g., toxicology), which NMFS currently lacks. The proposed increase would allow NMFS to obtain toxicological expertise and fund additional research to address data gaps. The increase will allow senior Section 7 biologists to be dedicated full-time to write and coordinate Biological Opinions with the assistance of toxicologists, spatial analysts, and junior staff biologists. Existing staff capacity is not adequate to absorb the new pesticide workload without creating significant impacts to other consultation programs.

NOAA request an increase of $11,088,000 for a total of $15,100,000 for Columbia River Biological Opinion Implementation – Increased funds are requested for research/monitoring/evaluation (RM&E) as part of the implementation of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS). The RM&E program provides the scientific information necessary to assess achievement of the Biological Opinion (BiOp) performance measures. The success or failure of the actions specified under the BiOp to avoid jeopardy and begin the rebuilding of the anadromous fish resources of the Columbia River basin will be judged based on the results of comprehensive monitoring of the abundance, productivity, distribution, and diversity of listed salmonid populations. The goal is to measure changes in habitat capacity, and establish a linkage between habitat attributes and fish distribution, and tracking population growth rate and habitat trends. This initiative also ensures documentation and early-alerts on progress toward attainment of performance measures. This funding also provides for the research needed to address key uncertainties identified in the BiOp in the areas of estuary and near-shore ocean survival, delayed effects of dams passage, and the effects of hatchery programs on the productivity of naturally spawning fish.

To develop and implement such a program will require coordination of agency resources throughout the Columbia River basin, implementation of pilot monitoring programs in selected recovery domains, and development of an analytical framework for analyses of large-scale data sets of fish populations and habitat with respect to assessing the impacts of offsite mitigation, restoration actions, and the progress of specific populations and Evolutionarily Significant Units towards recovery.

TERMINATIONS FOR FY 2006:

The following programs, or portions thereof, have been terminated in FY 2006: Protected Species Research and Management Programs ($1,040,000); Marine Mammals ($43,481,000); Marine Turtles ($5,243,000).

Subactivity: Fisheries Research and Management
Line Item: Fish

GOAL STATEMENT:

Provide accurate and timely information and analyses on the biological, ecological, economic, and social aspects of the Nation's fisheries resources and develop, implement, and monitor living marine resource management measures to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Strategic Plan Goal of an Ecosystem Approach to Management.

BASE DESCRIPTION:

Fisheries Science

Fisheries Science is administered by the Ecosystem Observation (EO) program. On behalf of the EO program, the NMFS Science Centers conduct scientific investigation and research that provides the basis for the science-based conservation and management of our Nation's fisheries and understanding of the principles underlying the dynamics of living marine resources and their environment.

NOAA's research laboratories conduct research nationwide on living marine resources and their environments. Research vessel surveys provide information on the distribution and abundance of living marine resources. Scientists use NOAA, state, university, and private vessels (contracted) and aircraft to conduct these resource surveys.

Research is conducted on predator-prey relationships, mortality and growth rates, age and gender structure, reproductive status, distribution and migration, habitat and physiological requirements, and diseases. These data contribute to an understanding of biological processes that is necessary to develop sound conservation and management programs.

NOAA also collects commercial and recreational fisheries data. These data are essential to assess the status of fisheries and to develop options to manage fisheries for both biological and economic growth and sustainability. Data are collected through a combination of Federal, state, and contractual mechanisms. Information, analyses, and recommendations on the status of stocks and the effects of current and potential management regulations are provided to Regional Fishery Management Councils, states, interstate commissions, and international treaty regulatory bodies.

Fisheries Management

Fisheries Management activities are administered by NOAA's Fisheries Management program. The Fisheries Management program supports a comprehensive program of rules, regulations, conditions, methods, fishery management plans, and other science-based measures that are:

(1) Required to rebuild, restore, develop or maintain any fishery or fishery resource and the environment; and

(2) Designed to assure that,
   (a) A supply of food or other products may be taken, and that recreational benefits may be obtained, on a continuing basis;
   (b) Irreversible or long-term adverse effects on fishery resources and the environment are avoided; and
   (c) There will be a multiplicity of options available with respect to future uses of these resources.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) established exclusive U.S. jurisdiction over the living marine resources in the 2.2 million square miles of ocean area, known as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), generally within 200 nautical miles of the coastline of the U.S. and its territories. The Magnuson-Stevens Act is intended to ensure that fishing within the EEZ is managed using sound, scientifically-based research. Through management decisions, government regulations, enforcement, and conservation activities, NOAA and the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils (established by the Magnuson-Stevens Act) work with states, industry, other Federal agencies, and other organizations to sustain and to restore fishery resources and their habitats and to enhance the health of the U.S. fishing industries. These efforts require a continuous, stable flow of data, information, and analyses provided by NOAA, states, universities, and the international scientific community.

The Regional Fishery Management Councils have the major responsibility for developing Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) for most domestic and foreign fisheries in the EEZ. The Councils also evaluate estuarine and freshwater issues affecting managed species under their purview. NOAA provides the Councils with technical and administrative assistance and financial support to develop, monitor, and amend FMPs. There is extensive consultation throughout the FMP process among NMFS Regional Administrators, who sit on the Regional Fishery Management Councils, NMFS Science Directors, the Regional Councils and staffs, and NMFS headquarters staff. The Councils also review applications for fishing permits from foreign countries, conduct more than 200 public hearings and meetings, estimate yields, and determine the total allowable level of domestic and foreign fishing for each fishery under management within their jurisdiction. NOAA and NMFS review management plans and amendments developed by the Councils to ensure compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable laws, and under authority delegated by the Secretary of Commerce, approves or rejects them. Upon approval, NOAA/NMFS then implements the plans and amendments through promulgation and enforcement of regulations, issuing permits, and collecting fees, if applicable. NOAA also develops national standards and legislative initiatives to guide the management of the Nation's fisheries.

Under amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Secretary of Commerce is directly responsible for the development and implementation of FMPs for any highly migratory species fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea (in the Pacific Ocean, the Regional Fishery Management Councils are responsible for developing management programs for highly migratory species). The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires the Secretary to

identify research and information priorities, including observer requirements and necessary data collection and analysis for the conservation and management of highly migratory species, especially tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks.

Fishery resources that range beyond the EEZ and are harvested by fishing fleets of the U.S. and many other countries, must be monitored, assessed, and conserved. Resources that must be monitored and assessed include tuna, swordfish, billfish, sharks, groundfish, scallops, and salmon. To maximize U.S. access and to conserve these resources, NOAA actively participates in numerous international management efforts. Such efforts include the Pacific Salmon Commission, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and the International Pacific Halibut Commission. NOAA monitors significant fishery activities in foreign countries to determine the effects on U.S. interests. Information on foreign fishing practices, policies, and programs is obtained through United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization bulletins and reports, translations and reviews of technical and industrial literature, discussions with international fishery officials, and communications with U.S. diplomatic officers.

Information collected in the various fishery assessment activities on the inputs of fishing industry production is used to analyze and model alternative regulatory regimes and forecast their likely impacts on the biology and economics of the fishery. Production output information is used to determine the efficacy of management decisions and to track regulatory compliance by the participants. Timely and accurate harvest information is vital to ensuring the effective quota-based, seasonal, area, and in-season management regulations. Production information consists of biological, sociological, and economic information collected from commercial and recreational fisheries, as well as samples of recreational and commercial catch.

Habitat conservation and enhancement efforts directly support the essential fish habitat requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. They reduce the destruction and degradation of habitats essential to living marine resources for spawning and growth to maturity. They protect and conserve habitats by helping people identify and evaluate the impacts of actions on habitat. They also develop measures to restore or enhance the value of habitat multiple uses.

Given the opportunities to expand trade and competitiveness and the use of trade measures to support conservation objectives, NOAA ensures that policy makers have the best information possible to evaluate the impacts of decisions. NOAA is responsible for formulating strategy and positions on fishery trade for bilateral and multilateral negotiations and participates as the Department's fishing industry sector staff. Activities include providing technical expertise and negotiating skills in multi- and bilateral efforts to reduce barriers in the trade of fish and fishery products. NOAA provides support for the U.S. Trade Representative's bilateral trade negotiations with Japan, Korea, and Taiwan and conducts regular technical bilateral discussions with Canada and the European Community. NOAA also provides support for actions under U.S. trade law, such as protection from import injury and retaliation for unfair trade practices. NOAA assists the Department's U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service activities in foreign countries promoting U.S. exports and U.S. Department of Agriculture food programs that purchase and distribute eligible seafood products domestically and internationally.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

The Administration will work with Congress to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, P.L. 104-297.

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL DATA

(Dollars in thousands)

Subactivity: Fisheries Research and Management	FY 2004 ACTUALS	FY 2005 CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	FY 2006 BASE PROGRAM	FY 2006 ESTIMATE	INCREASE / DECREASE
Line Item: Fish					
Fisheries Research and Management Base	112,582	123,209	126,796	127,831	1,035
American Fisheries Act	5,820	6,037	5,625	5,625	-
Anadromous Grants	1,999	1,971	2,000	2,100	100
Economics & Social Science Research	3,894	4,041	4,100	9,618	5,518
Expand Annual Stock Assessment – Improve Data Collection	19,231	20,501	20,800	25,397	4,597
Fisheries Information Network/Data Collection	19,783	21,970	21,399	21,399	-
Fisheries Oceanography	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Fisheries Statistics	13,361	12,587	12,771	12,771	-
Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants	2,465	2,464	2,500	2,590	90
National Standard 8	892	984	998	998	-
Product Quality and Safety	8,113	7,392	6,724	6,724	-
Reduce Fishing Impacts on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)	478	493	500	500	-
Reduce Bycatch	4,776	3,745	2,800	2,800	-
Regional Council and Fisheries Commissions	22,496	24,641	24,641	25,946	1,305
Salmon Management Activities	24,904	27,747	25,411	25,411	-
Survey and Monitoring Project	21,508	23,877	23,290	23,290	-
Other fisheries-related projects	23,141	16,214	-	-	-
TOTAL	285,443	297,873	280,355	294,000	13,645
FTE	1,482	1,482	1,422	1,444	22

PROGRAM CHANGES FOR FY 2006:

All increases will support the objective, "Enhance the conservation and management of coastal and marine resources to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs" under the Department of Commerce Strategic Goal of, "Observe, protect, and manage the Earth's resources to promote environmental stewardship."

Fisheries Research and Management Programs (0 FTE and +$1,035,000): NOAA requests a net increase of $1,035,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $127,831,000 for Fisheries Research and Management Programs. This increase has two components.

This request includes a net increase of $595,000 for Regulatory Streamlining – This net increase includes an increase of $2,950,000, offset by a decrease of $2,355,000. These increases will allow NOAA to improve the quality and timeliness of regulatory processes and policy development for its Fishery Management Program. These funds will enable NOAA to more fully assist in the development, review, and implementation of Regional Fishery Management Council proposed actions. The FY 2006 request allows for implementation of the Regulatory Streamlining Program through completion of quality control/quality assurance and training programs for all agency staff associated with the development and review of Council actions and applying e-government solutions to the conduct of both internal and external agency fishery management functions. This increased capacity has a direct linkage to NOAA's strategic objectives of rebuilding and maintaining sustainable fisheries. With this increase, NOAA will be able to increase the quality and timely development of regulatory evaluations, analyses, and permits issued. This additional funding, in concert with Councils activities, supports activities that will reduce the number of overfished stocks from 37 in FY 2006 to 26 in five years by insuring that regulatory documents have comprehensive impact analyses, fully consider all relevant issues in a timely manner, are compliant with all applicable laws and procedures, and are able to withstand legal challenge (and thus are less likely to be challenged).

Paralleling the increase in Council activities to implement ecosystem-based management measures will be an equivalent increase in the analysis, evaluation and implementation efforts of NMFS regional offices. Additional regional staff will be needed to expand their capacity to meet Council demands, including efforts to facilitate and expedite Secretarial approval and implementation of FMP's and amendments and preparing analytical documents in support of rulemaking.

The increase will also be used: To develop and maintain an electronic rulemaking system and associated databases. This will reduce the time required to review and process rules and regulations, increase public participation, and generate long-term cost savings to the government. Funds will also be used to implement an electronic permitting system for fisheries and protected species that will allow applicants to apply for and receive routine renewals and some first-time permits via the Internet. Using an electronic permit system will result in a one-stop shopping web portal where all commercial, recreational and industry constituents can determine what permits are required for fishing or conducting business with NMFS anywhere in the United States, and enable them to obtain those permits directly via the Internet.

NOAA requests an increase of $440,000 for Vessel Buybacks – In FY 2006, NOAA will partner with the fishing industry to plan and conduct a voluntary permit buyback program in the commercial sector of the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) pelagic and bottom longline fisheries. This reduction will help achieve an appropriate balance between resource availability and harvesting capacity in this fishery, reduce conflicts with recreational user groups targeting these resources, and reduce bycatch of important species like blue and white marlin and endangered sea turtles. This program will be planned in coordination with a proposed Gulf of Mexico grouper fishery buyback program as there is a large degree of overlap in permitted vessels targeting these fisheries. In FY 2005, NOAA received a no year $350,000 appropriation to cover the Federal Credit Reform Act cost of an industry funded buyback program to reduce overcapacity in the grouper fishery. Coordinating the HMS permit buyback program with the proposed grouper program will advance an ecosystem approach to management and will decrease harvesting overcapacity more effectively and efficiently than separate programs.

NOAA proposes that the costs of these programs be paid for through a long term loan to permit holders remaining in the fishery under fishing capacity reduction program procedures specified in sections 312(b)-(e) under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. If approved in a referendum of eligible permit holders, the loan will be issued under the Fishery Finance Program and will be repaid through an assessment on exvessel payments to remaining permit holders for landed fish. These assessments will be collected at point -of- first sale. The Federal Credit Act or subsidy cost of this loan, which must be appropriated, is estimated to be $60,000 is requested under the Fisheries Finance Program Account. The balance of the funds in this request ($440,000) will be used for detailed program planning, development, and execution of buyback programs.

Expand Stock Assessments – Improve Data Collection (8 FTE and +$4,597,000): NOAA requests a net increase of $4,597,000 and 8 FTE for a total of $25,397,000. These resources will be used to Modernize and Expand Stock Assessments based on comprehensive Marine Fisheries Stock Assessment Improvement Plans, provide 250 additional charter days at sea to expand fishery-independent field data, and to install Fisheries Scientific Computer Systems onboard 3 NOAA Fishery Survey Vessels and 1 chartered fishing vessel. These additional resources will help address long-standing shortfalls in fisheries science, fishery monitoring, and fisheries data management capabilities identified by internal and external NOAA review panels.

The Marine Fisheries Stock Assessment Improvement Plan (SAIP) guides NOAA's investments in fishery science infrastructure and staff resources to improve the comprehensiveness, timeliness, quality, and communication of state-of-the-art stock assessments. The SAIP also provides new national standards to evaluate stock assessment performance, i.e., "Tiers of Assessment Excellence." The SAIP identifies how many stock assessment personnel are required to collect and process biological samples; build and maintain fishery-independent, and commercial and recreational fisheries databases (including data integration and management through the National Fisheries Information System); synthesize and model the data; research improved assessment methodologies; and communicate stock assessment results and forecasts to fisheries managers.

FY 2006 funds will support new assessment FTEs, contract staff, external academic partners, and state partners to increase the quantity and quality of data collected and processed from NMFS resource surveys and from commercial and recreational fisheries. Information technology development needed to improve the integration and management of fishery-independent and fishery-dependent data are also addressed.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

The increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and GPRA measure, "Number of Major Stocks with an Unknown Stock Status." The measure focuses on increasing the number of stocks with a known population status. This increase will follow the SAIP and assist in overcoming the shortfalls in the ability to determine the population status of stocks.

Performance Goal 3: Ecosystem	**FY 2006 without Increase**	**FY 2006 with Increase**
GPRA Measure: Number of Major Fish Stocks with an "Unknown" Stock Status	81	77
Lower Level Measures:		
Marine Fish Stock Assessment Improvement Plan		
1. Number of fish assessments with upgraded model level	0	+6
2. Number of fish assessments with upgraded level of catch, abundance, or life history input data.	0	+6
3. Total number of updated fish assessments	0	+3

Economics and Social Science Research (14 FTEs and +$5,518,000): NOAA requests an increase of $5,518,000 and 14 FTE for a total of $9,618,000 to enhance economic and socio-cultural data collection programs, data which is necessary to estimate both the market and non-market benefits society derives from living marine resources and for assessing the human impacts from and responses to management decisions. This investment supports the applied modeling and research needed for implementing effective ecosystem approaches to management and enhances NOAA's ability to meet legal mandates for cost-benefit analysis of regulatory actions under Executive Order 12866, the Magnuson-Stevens Act (particularly National Standards 1, 5, 7, 8, and 9), the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

These activities will support effective management of marine resources by enabling NOAA to:

- Conduct legally mandated economic analyses of proposed fishery management options for 26 fishery management plans by FY 2006, enhancing NOAA's ability to identify management options that achieve the conservation standard at least cost to society, thereby reducing the risk of court challenges due to inadequate economic analyses;
- Estimate habitat restoration costs and existence values associated with ESA recovery plans;
- Assess the cost effectiveness of and benefits derived from habitat and protected species stewardship decisions;
- Estimate fishing capacity and the cost of reducing over-capacity for all fishery management plans with a commercial fishing component;
- Conduct economic analyses on strategies used by fishermen to target fish stocks, including estimating harvest of target species and marketable bycatch species for all fishery management plans;
- Assess and predict bycatch of non-marketable protected species for all fishery management plans;

- Estimate the economic impact of fishing on the local, state, and national economies as well as assess the economic and socio-cultural impacts of regulations on shoreside industry and fishing-dependent communities; and
- Assess both the short- and long-term economic effects of federal yearlong marine-managed areas in all six NMFS regions.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

The increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and nearly all of the related GPRA Performance measures. Nearly all of NMFS management activities involve both costs and benefits to society. Understanding how the cost-benefit to fishers, processors, consumers, and communities is vital to effectively implementing research and regulatory programs. In addition, the Magnuson-Stevens Act mandates NOAA to consider the effects of regulations on the fishing industry and on fishing communities. This increase will enhance NOAA's ability to analyze socio-economic impacts of management actions and minimize the costs to society. The increase in funding will enable NOAA to achieve 100% of all economic and social data collection performance goal targets by FY 2008. Absent this funding, the NOAA will only meet 35% of performance goal targets by FY 2008.

Performance Goal 3: Ecosystem	FY 2006 without Increase	FY 2006 with Increase
GPRA Measures: Reduced number of overfished major fish stocks.	42	42
Lower Level Measure:		
Number of fishery management plans with economic data (variable cost, annual operating cost and revenue) collected to estimate net benefits to and regulatory economic impacts on commercial harvesters.	12	26
Number of coastal states and/or territories for which community profiles are available.	7	20
GPRA Measures: Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered, or depleted with stable or increasing population levels. Number of protected species with known impacts from fisheries for which mortalities have been reduced to acceptable levels. Number of protected species designated as threatened, endangered, depleted, or strategic stocks, for which recovery, conservation and/or take reduction plans are in place.	22	22
Lower Level Measure:		
Number of protected species economic valuations conducted. GPRA Measure: Number of acres of coastal habitat restored	12 4500	25 4575
Lower Level Measure:		
Number of federal year-long, marine managed areas for which sufficient data exist to estimate economic impacts on commercial and recreational fishers.	6	20

Regional Councils and Commissions (0 FTE and +$1,305,000): NOAA requests a net increase of $1,305,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $25,946,000 for Regional Councils and Commissions. The net increase has three components (Interstate Fish Commission, Regional Council's and Dedicated Access Privilege program) and is offset with a reduction of $1,868,000 for the Interstate Fish Commission – Atlantic Cooperative Management program.

NOAA requests a net increase of $11,000 for a total of $750,000 for Interstate Fish Commission – 3 Commissions - This increase will support the operations of the three interstate fishery commissions, Atlantic States Fisheries Commission, Gulf States Fisheries Commision, and the Pacific States Fisheries Commission. The three Interstate Marine Fishery Commissions are critical to managing and conserving our shared coastal fisheries within the first three miles of the nation's coastline.

The net increase includes $2,762,000 for Regional Councils for a total request of $17,547,000 – Of this amount, $1,762,000 will increase the capacity of the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils (RFMCs) to provide for their full participation in the Regulatory Streamlining Projects. This funding (through annual grants to the RFMCs) will allow the RFMCs to analyze a greater range of alternatives as they develop new Fishery Management Plans (FMP's) or amendments to current plans to reduce levels of overfishing and overcapacity while taking into consideration the impacts of their proposed actions on other components of the marine ecosystem.

Increased RFMP capabilities and implementation of the regulatory streamlining program will frontload consideration of policy issues so that they can be addressed early and efficiently in the regulatory review process, instead of late in the process when it becomes difficult to comprehensively address a new issue. Extensive analyses and documentation are required to comply with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and other mandates. With the Councils funded for the Regulatory Streamlining Project, they will be able to conduct the environmental, economic and other impact analyses required. These analyses will occur sufficiently early in the regulatoy process to facilitate consideration of a range of reasonable alternatives; this "no-surprises" approach will ensure compliance with the procedural requirements of the various mandates.

Also included within the $2,762,000 increase is $1,000,000 specifically for Dedicated Access Privilege Program Development – This increase will be used for Regional Fishery Management Councils to develop Dedicated Access Privilege (DAP) programs such as individual fishing quotas (IFQs). Development of DAP programs requires significant resources for economic analysis and design of programs for eligibility determination, permit issuance, and fishery monitoring. These funds would be made available on a competitive basis to support Councils with projects that advance DAP systems.

Dedicated access privileges such as IFQs provide many benefits. They end the 'race for fish' inherent in open access fisheries, which leads to over-capitalization and contributes to overfishing of resources. They contribute to safer fisheries, as vessel operators can choose to not fish in bad weather without fear that the quota will be taken by someone else. They increase the availability of high quality fresh fish and improve economic performance of the fishery. The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy recommended increasing use of DAP in fishery management and the Administration supports their use.

An increase of $400,000 is requested for International Fish Commissions – These funds support Alaska's participation to meet U.S. obligations regarding joint enhancement efforts on the Transboundary River system as specified in the U.S.-Canada Agreement Relating to the Pacific Salmon Treaty. The program involves supplementing the number of Sockeye Salmon available to fishermen by increasing fry production from several Transboundary Lakes through hatchery incubation in the U.S.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

The increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and GPRA measures, "Percentage of Plans to Rebuild Overfished Major Stocks to Sustainable Levels" and "Reduced Number of Overfished Major Stocks of Fish." This proposed increase would provide funding to create thorough and comprehensive fisheries management plans. To meet the GPRA measure, Regional Councils have a performance measure requirement to produce rebuilding plans within 18 months. This increase will enable the RFMC's to produce these plans more quickly and systematically to meet their performance measure target and for NOAA to fulfill the GPRA target.

This increase will expand the capacity of the RFMCs. Combined with the Fisheries Research and Management program resources, this increase will allow full implementation of the Regulatory Streamlining proposal by the fishery councils. The work of the councils directly supports NOAA strategic goals for marine environment ecosystem approaches to management, and is a necessary complement to NOAA's work. With increased funding for this and other requests, the percentage of plans to rebuild overfished major stocks to sustainable levels can be increased from 90% in 2004 to 98% (in 2006). Additionally, this increase and others contribute to decreasing the number of overfished major stocks of fish from 37 (2006), to 36 (2007), to 35 (2008), to 28 (2009). If this increase is not received, it will be difficult to produce adequately coordinated and comprehensive fishery management plans. This will put NOAA at an increased risk for litigation, and could also lead to fishery stock declines over time.

Performance Goal: Ecosystems	**FY2006 without Increase**	**FY2006 With Increase**
GPRA Performance Measures: Increased Percentage of Plans to Rebuild Overfished Major Stocks to Sustainable Levels	98%	98%. The proposed increase contributes to meeting performance goals by ensuring new plans are implemented for any new stocks identified as overfished and ensuring that plans are up to date.
GPRA Performance Measures: Reduced Number of Overfished Major Stocks of Fish	42	42. The proposed increase, in combination with other activities, will contribute to the success of this measure over time, by ensuring that management plans to reduce the number of overfished major stocks of fish from 44 in 2003 to 27 in 2010.

Fisheries Oceanography (0 FTE and +$1,000,000): NOAA requests an increase of $1,000,000 and 0 FTE for fisheries oceanography to improve stock assessments. This program will investigate basin-wide changes in atmospheric and oceanic circulation and their effects on marine populations. This program will develop biological and physical indicators that serve as early warnings of major basin-wide changes, due to changing climate regimes that affect the ecosystem and the fish stocks therein. Regime shifts occur rapidly as the components of the climate system realign themselves, moving from one state to another in a period of months. The ability to detect these impending regime shifts and predict their impacts on marine ecosystems and fisheries resources is critical to the NMFS stewardship mission. This investment will feed environmental and oceanographic data into new stock assessment models, thereby improving the prediction of changes in the distribution and abundance of fishery species as a result of changes in their physical and biotic environment. This program compliments the Stock Assessment Improvement Plan by providing the ecosystem context for measuring and predicting population health of species within the ecosystem (e.g., fish and marine mammals), and to anticipate how these populations might respond to environmental and climate changes.

Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants (0 FTE and +$90,000): NOAA requests an increase of $90,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $2,590,000 for Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants. This program is a competitive and non-competitive grant program that supports management of United States multi-jurisdictional fisheries. These projects respond to fishery research, habitat, and law enforcement needs under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act, Great Lakes Fisheries Commission's Strategic Plan, and the individual multi-jurisdictional State and interstate marine fisheries commission's fisheries management planning programs.

Anadromous Grants (0 FTE and +$100,000): NOAA requests and increase of $100,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $2,100,000 for Anadromous Grants. Projects funded under this program are conducted for the conservation, development, and enhancement of anadromous fishery resources (those that migrate from salt to fresh water for spawning) including similar species in the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain. All projects must be cleared with the State fishery agency of the State that the work is carried out in.

TERMINATIONS FOR FY 2006:

The following programs, or portions thereof, have been terminated in FY 2006: Fisheries Research and Management Programs ($4,426,000); Salmon Management Activities ($2,336,000); Fish Information Networks ($571,000); Survey and Monitoring Projects ($587,000); American Fisheries Act ($412,000); Reducing Bycatch ($945,000); Product Quality and Safety ($668,000); Other Fisheries Related Projects ($16,214,000).

Subactivity: Enforcement and Observers / Training
Line Item: Enforcement

GOAL STATEMENT:

Provide a comprehensive program for protection of the Nation's living marine resources through enforcement of a variety of Federal laws and regulations**.**

BASE DESCRIPTION:

The primary objective of the NOAA Enforcement program is to assure compliance with the laws and regulations promulgated to conserve and protect our nation's living marine resources. Enforcement supports the NOAA Ecosystems Goal - "Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through an ecosystem approach to management." Enforcement is the final, critical management activity in this mission.

NOAA Enforcement's services are achieved through the application of three primary approaches; investigations, patrol and inspections, and outreach and education. NOAA special agents and officers detect, deter, investigate, and document for prosecution, violations of Federal laws and regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, Lacey Act, and other Federal statutes and international agreements relating to living marine resources.

Base activities support the objective, "Enhance the conservation and management of coastal and marine resources to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs" under the Department of Commerce Strategic Goal of "Observe, protect, and manage the Earth's resources to promote environmental stewardship."

The Cooperative Enforcement Program (Partnerships in Enforcement) expands the enforcement resources available to address this mission through joint agreements with marine resource enforcement agencies of coastal States and U.S. Territories. NOAA now holds cooperative enforcement agreements with twenty coastal states and three U.S. Territories. This program provides shoreside and dockside patrols, near shore vessel patrols, and some offshore vessel patrols. While the Office for Law Enforcement is currently authorized to employ 147 Special Agents and 17 Enforcement Officers assigned to 53 offices around the coastal United States and U.S. Territories, the cooperative enforcement program makes more than 2,000 state and territorial resource officers available to support the NOAA Enforcement program. The work performed by the State and Territorial agencies under these agreements not only augments the federal enforcement effort, but also supports enforcement missions of U.S. States and Territories.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

The Administration will work with Congress to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, P.L. 104-297, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, P.L. 103-238, and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), P.L. 100-478.

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL DATA
(Dollars in thousands)

Subactivity: Enforcement and Observers / Training	FY 2004 ACTUALS	FY 2005 CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	FY 2006 BASE PROGRAM	FY 2006 ESTIMATE	INCREASE / DECREASE
Line Item: Enforcement					
Enforcement	47,307	45,824	47,744	54,171	6,427
TOTAL	47,307	45,824	47,744	54,171	6,427
FTE	188	188	188	188	-

PROGRAM CHANGES FOR FY 2006:

Enforcement and Surveillance (0 FTE and +$6,427,000): NOAA requests an increase of $6,427,000 and 0 FTE for Enforcement and Surveillance for a total request of $54,171,000.

This request includes an increase of $729,000. However, this increase is offset by a reduction of $591,000 for Driftnet Act Implementation. The increase will enhance NOAA's enforcement capabilities and it will allow NOAA to focus on the ability to analyze complex business records, to retrieve and analyze data contained within computerized systems, analysis of trends within commercial and recreational fishing and other regulated activity that impacts marine resources, and both direct investigative and investigative support staff. Improvements will impact fisheries management, protected resource management, enforcement of international agreements, and the NOS National Marine Sanctuary program. Improved analysis will increase the effectiveness of investigative efforts in suppressing violations of domestic and treaty resource protection measures and thereby protect the managed resource.

NOAA requests an increase of $6,289,000 for the Vessel Monitoring System, for a total request of $9,300,000. This increase will support expansion of the use of vessel monitoring systems (VMS) for scientific and homeland security which monitors vessel movement. Increased use of VMS is one of the most efficient mechanisms to improve NMFS' ability to monitor and enforce closed areas for protection of endangered species, critical habitat, and the rebuilding and maintenance of sustainable fisheries. The number of vessels actively participating in the vessel monitoring program is expected to continue to increase. The requested increase will maintain NMFS' ability to monitor vessel movement and respond effectively to potential and actual violations. Of this amount, $4,800,00 is needed to support and maintain the existing infrastructure of the system. An increase of $4,500,000 will cover the costs of purchasing and installing units on approximately 2,000 additional vessels.

Subactivity: Enforcement and Observers / Training
Line Item: Observers & Training

GOAL STATEMENT:

Collect accurate and high quality data on standardized fisheries, protected species, and environmental parameters from commercial and recreational fishing vessels to better assess impacts of fishing activities and regulations on living marine resources and fishing communities in order to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Strategic Plan Goal of an Ecosystem Approach to Management.

BASE DESCRIPTION:

NMFS deploys fishery observers to collect catch and bycatch data from U.S. commercial fishing and processing vessels. NMFS has been using observers to collect fisheries data from 1972 to the present. Observers have monitored fishing activities on all U.S. coasts, collecting data for a range of conservation and management issues. Nearly 40 different fisheries are monitored by observer programs annually. The data collected by the observer programs are often the best means to get current data on the status of many fisheries. Without observers and observer programs, there would not be sufficient data in many fisheries for effective management.

The authority to place observers on commercial fishing and processing vessels operating in particular fisheries is provided either by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) or the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA).

The Magnuson-Stevens Act authorizes the placement of observers to collect information needed for fishery management and conservation. Authorization for deployment of observers is found under section 303(b)(8). In addition, Section 303(a)(11) requires that all fishery management plans establish a standardized reporting methodology to assess the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery. Fishery observers are one of the most reliable methods for reporting bycatch, and are a critical component of the reporting methodologies required in several fisheries that have known levels of bycatch.

NMFS has developed 43 Fishery Management Plans and manages 143 distinct fisheries within these plans. The information collected by fisheries observers ensures that fishery management plans are consistent with the requirement for a standardized bycatch reporting methodology. Observer programs also provide data for fishery managers to ensure that the following national standards for fishery conservation and management (section 301) are met:

- National Standard 1 “Conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield from each fishery for the United States fishing industry.”
- National Standard 2 “Conservation and management measures shall be based upon the best scientific information possible.”
- National Standard 9 “Conservation and management measures shall, to the extent practicable, (A) minimize bycatch and (B) to the extent bycatch cannot be avoided, minimize the mortality of such bycatch.”

Marine Mammal Protection Act

The Marine Mammal Protection Act, section 118, governs the incidental taking of marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations. It states that the immediate goal shall be to reduce the incidental mortality or serious injury of marine mammals to insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate. To achieve that goal, section 118(d) directs the agency to deploy observers on fishing vessels or remote vessels to monitor incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals during the course of commercial fishing operations.

Section 118 describes the duties of observers, establishes guidelines for the distribution of observers among fisheries and among vessels within a fishery, and establishes priorities for the placement of observers. The placement of observers is mandatory for fishermen participating in Category I and II fisheries (fisheries that have frequent or occasional incidental mortalities or serious injuries of marine mammals, respectively), and is voluntary for fishermen participating in Category III fisheries (fisheries that have a remote likelihood or no known incidental mortality or serious injury of marine mammals). Section 118 also directs the agency to develop and implement take reduction plans for marine mammal stocks that interact with Category I or II fisheries. These plans shall include an estimate of marine mammals incidentally killed or seriously injured each year during the course of commercial fishing operations. The most reliable source for this type of information is from data collected by onboard fisheries observers.

Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires the federal government to protect and conserve species and populations that are endangered or threatened with extinction. Federal or state actions that may impact endangered species, such as permitted fishing operations, must minimize these impacts. Endangered species taken as bycatch in fishing operations include sea turtles, Pacific salmon, seabirds and marine mammals. Observers are used to monitor impacts and certify that takes of endangered species do not exceed the authorized incidental take limit. Observer data are also used to prepare recovery plans. Recovery plans for marine species generally include a requirement to reduce incidental capture of protected species in commercial fishing operations. In some cases, fisheries can be restricted or terminated because they impose mortality rates on protected species that impede the recovery of the listed population.

NMFS implements its observer programs in each of its six regions. In addition, the Office of Science and Technology in NMFS headquarters coordinates improvements in data collection, observer training, and the integration of observer data with other research. Collectively, the regional programs and the headquarters office comprise the agency's National Observer Program. The National Observer Program seeks to support observer programs and increase their usefulness to the overall goals of NMFS.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

The Administration will work with Congress to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, P.L. 104-297 and the Marine Mammal Protection Act, P.L. 103-238.

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL DATA

(Dollars in thousands)

Subactivity: Enforcement and Observers / Training	FY 2004 ACTUALS	FY 2005 CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	FY 2006 BASE PROGRAM	FY 2006 ESTIMATE	INCREASE / DECREASE
Line Item: Observers & Training					
Observers & Training	23,880	24,523	24,523	25,992	1,469
TOTAL	23,880	24,523	24,523	25,992	1,469
FTE	61	61	61	63	2

PROGRAM CHANGES FOR FY 2006:

Observers/Training-Fishery Observers-Expand and Modernize Data Collection (2 FTE and +$1,469,000): NOAA requests a net increase of $1,469,000 and 2 FTE for a total of $25,992,000 to increase observer coverage. This net increase in observer coverage will provide an additional 604 sea days over the FY 2005 level for a total 64,000 sea days. This level of funding will also enable NOAA to fully meet sampling design objectives in three currently observed fisheries and initiate coverage in two additional fisheries to obtain preliminary estimates of catch and bycatch rates. This information will allow development and implementation of a statistically valid sampling design in these fisheries within three to five years. In addition, NOAA will deploy electronic monitoring (video cameras) in selected fisheries to supplement existing coverage, develop standards for hiring and training of observers, improve sampling design and analytical support, increase outreach to fishermen on observer program objectives and information collected, and publish summary reports of data collected.

The increases requested within the Fishery Observer funds are expected to provide additional coverage within the following fisheries:

- South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico shrimp otter trawl fisheries (currently observed at less than adequate levels)
- Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico directed large coastal shark bottom longline fishery (currently observed at less than adequate levels)
- Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico reef and bottom longline, handline and bandit rig fisheries (currently unobserved)

By the end of 2006, with the funds requested, NOAA will have observers deployed in 41 fisheries, with adequate or near adequate levels of observer coverage in approximately 28 of these fisheries.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data

This increase will support the objective, "Enhance the conservation and management of coastal and marine resources to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs" under the Department of Commerce Strategic Goal of, "Observe, protect, and manage the Earth's resources to promote environmental stewardship." Specifically, this increase supports the Ecosystem Goal and GPRA measures, "Number of Major Stocks with an Unknown Status," "Number of Protected Species Designated as Threatened, Endangered, or Depleted with Stable or Increasing Population Levels," and "Number of Protected Species with Known Impacts from Fisheries for which Mortalities Have Been Reduced to Acceptable Levels." Data from observers are used to understand the population status and trends of fish stocks and protected species, as well as the interactions between them. Observer data is necessary for determining levels of bycatch of protected species and non-target fish stocks, which can be a major factor affecting mortality rates and, thus, population status and recovery of protected species.

Performance Goal 3: Ecosystem	**FY 2006 without Increase**	**FY 2006 with Increase**
GPRA Measure: Number of Major Fish Stocks with an "Unknown" Stock Status	81	77
Lower Level Measure: Number of fisheries with adequate levels of observer coverage	26	29

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Subactivity: Habitat Conservation & Restoration
Line Item: Habitat Conservation

GOAL STATEMENT:

Conduct a habitat management program to maintain high economic and ecological productivity of the Nation's living marine resources and support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Strategic Plan Goal of an Ecosystem Approach to Management.

BASE DESCRIPTION:

The objective of these activities are to support the integration of research and management to provide scientific advice for use in permit, licensing, and management activities: (1) by working directly with developers in permit and license applications; (2) by supporting Regional Fishery Management Councils in developing positions on specific projects; (3) by increasing overall habitat conservation awareness within Federal, state, and local agencies; and (4) by improving programs that gather, transfer, and use data on habitats and biological diversity.

Habitat protection activities are vital to the long-term survival and health of living marine resources, especially those important to U.S. commercial and recreational marine fisheries, and to increasing the economic and social benefits the Nation gains from its fisheries resources. NOAA reviews the ecological impacts of proposed Federal actions that would affect the habitat of anadromous (e.g., salmon and shad), estuarine, and marine resources. Habitat conservation also protects in-river spawning, rearing, and migration through partnerships with state and private sector activities.
In addition, under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, NOAA and the Regional Fishery Management Councils review Federal decisions affecting essential fisheries habitat. NOAA uses a streamlined consultation process to provide analyses and recommendations on Federal construction projects, applications for dredging and filling wetlands, licenses for hydroelectric power plant construction, Environmental Protection Agency contaminant discharge permits, and other Federal funding and permit activities. The program also leads agency efforts to evaluate the effects of fishing activity on essential fish habitat.

Each year, NMFS regional offices and headquarters provide written comments on about 10,000 individual actions (pre-application discussions, permit applications, license renewals, environmental analyses, management plans, draft policies and guidance, etc.) Collectively, that effort under authorities in nearly a dozen mandates represents a major effort to conserve marine, estuarine, and riverine habitats that support NOAA trust resources. As an example of the magnitude of this effort, consider that our Southeast Region (North Carolina to Texas, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) responds to about 5,000 requests annually. In FY 2003, a sampling of 400 permit and license applications from that workload revealed that the proposed actions would have affected about 53,400 acres of habitat. Technical comments provided by the Southeast Region's Habitat Conservation Division conserved 49,600 of those acres, or nearly 93% of the total acreage that had been proposed. That success rate reflects the value of NOAA science and management insights to state and federal decision makers. The acreage involved reflects the importance of those efforts to the continued health of trust resources.

NOAA also uses its expertise to influence decisions at the ecosystem or watershed level where protection and restoration successes can be even more dramatic. The Program pursues estuary improvements through regional studies, such as in the Chesapeake Bay, and with partners to enhance watersheds and coastal ecosystems. These efforts provide large-scale benefits to resources and to our goals of no net habitat loss, increased yields, streamlined efficiencies, and sustained societal benefits.

Base activities support the objective, "Enhance the conservation and management of coastal and marine resources to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs" under the Department of Commerce Strategic Goal of "Observe, protect, and manage the Earth's resources to promote environmental stewardship."

PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

None.

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL DATA

(Dollars in thousands)

Subactivity: Habitat Conservation & Restoration	FY 2004 ACTUALS	FY 2005 CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	FY 2006 BASE PROGRAM	FY 2006 ESTIMATE	INCREASE / DECREASE
Line Item: Habitat Conservation					
Sustainable Habitat Management	22,165	19,910	20,837	18,798	(2,039)
Fisheries Habitat Restoration	19,056	33,338	15,298	15,298	-
TOTAL	41,221	53,248	36,135	34,096	(2,039)
FTE	232	232	235	235	-

PROGRAM CHANGES FOR FY 2006:

Sustainable Habitat Management (0FTE and -$2,039,000): NOAA requests a decrease of $2,039,000 in programs from the overall Sustainable Habitat Management line item. This decrease includes the termination of both the Non-Native Oyster Chesapeake Bay Program (-$2,168,000) and the Blue Crab Advanced Research Consortium (-$1,971,000). These terminations offset an increase of $2,100,000 for Habitat Conservation to provide enhanced scientific advice for use in permit licensing, and habitat management activities. The funds will support the integration of research and management to provide scientific advice for use in permit, licensing, and management activities: (1) by working directly with developers in permit and license applications; (2) by supporting Regional Fishery Management Councils in developing positions on specific projects; (3) by increasing overall habitat conservation awareness within Federal, state and local agencies; and (4) by improving programs that gather, transfer, and use data on habitats and biological diversity. These funds include habitat protection activities are vital to the long-term survival and health of living marine resources, especially those important to U.S. commercial and recreational marine fisheries, and to increasing the economic and social benefits the Nation gains from its fisheries resources. NOAA reviews the ecological impacts of proposed Federal actions that would affect the habitat of anadromous, estuarine, and marine resources. Habitat conservation also protects in-river spawning, rearing and migrating habitat. All of these benefits would be substantially reduced if these funds are not restored, including a reduction of NMFS ability to implement the Administration energy policy objective to reduce the process time for energy projects.

Fisheries Habitat Restoration (0 FTE and $0) – The total base amount of $15,298,000 for Fisheries Habitat Restoration includes $1,500,000 and 3 FTE to establish a Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Program, emphasizing protection and restoration of NOAA trust resources at the watershed scale within the Great Lakes areas of concern. The Great Lakes are North America's freshwater seas and are one of the Nation's most important aquatic resources from an economic, geographic, international, ecological and societal perspective. Their restoration, protection and sustainable use are a matter of national priority. On May 18, 2004, Executive Order 13340 was signed creating the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force to help establish a regional collaboration of national significance for the Great Lakes. The Task Force brings together ten agencies including DOC to work on restoring the Great Lakes. NOAA's program will focus on restoring Great Lakes aquatic resources, with an emphasis on commonly occurring lake-wide problems such as providing technical support to

assist in the prevention of invasive species and limiting the spread of established invasive species, the remediation of contaminated sediment and the presence of persistent contaminants, beach closings, and the loss of high quality fish and wildlife habitat.

The two primary components of the Great Lakes Restoration Program will be: 1) the establishment of a cross-NOAA Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Program Office at NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL) and 2) the coordination and funding for three ecosystem-based, science-driven, restoration projects addressing lake-wide problems that can be used to develop guidelines throughout the Great Lakes. It is expected that a competitive criteria-based proposal process (for Great Lakes communities) will provide for partnerships and additional funds from other federal agencies, states, and local municipalities of at least an additional $4 million to $8 million. Overall, this program will develop a strong NOAA presence and leadership in habitat restoration in the Great Lakes.

TERMINATIONS FOR FY 2006:

The following programs, or portions thereof, have been terminated in FY 2006: Fisheries Habitat Restoration ($18,156,000).

Subactivity: Other Activities Supporting Fisheries
Line Item: Other Activities Supporting Fisheries

GOAL STATEMENT:

Provide accurate and timely information and analyses for the conservation of the Nation's living marine resources to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Strategic Plan Goal of an Ecosystem Approach to Management.

BASE DESCRIPTION:

Other Activities Supporting Fisheries includes items that cross multiple NMFS programs and therefore do not fit under one specific subactivity. Activities funded include: computer hardware and software, cooperative research, information analysis and dissemination, and Alaska fishery management and habitat conservation projects, NEPA, and facilities maintenance.

Cooperative research, one of the larger programs classified under "Other Activities," provides a means for commercial and recreational fishermen to become involved in the collection of fundamental fisheries information to support the development and evaluation of management options. Through cooperative research, industry and other stakeholders can partner with NMFS and university scientists, in all phases of the research program, including survey/statistical design, conducting of research, analysis of results, and communication of results. The collection of information on fisheries resources through cooperative research programs assists scientists and managers by providing information to supplement the data currently collected through existing federal research programs. The information collected through well-designed and scientifically valid cooperative research programs is useful in improving the information base for single species, as well as multi species and ecosystem assessment models. Ultimately, this additional information will improve the evaluation of stock status and the management of fishery resources. The information provided can cover a wide range of research areas, including, but not limited to, fishery dependent data, life history studies, conservation engineering, species abundance and distribution, habitat studies, and socio-economic studies.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

None.

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL DATA

(Dollars in thousands)

Subactivity: Other Activities Supporting Fisheries	FY 2004 ACTUALS	FY 2005 CURRENTLY AVAILABLE	FY 2006 BASE PROGRAM	FY 2006 ESTIMATE	INCREASE / DECREASE
Line Item: Other Activities Supporting Fisheries					
Antarctic Research	1,471	1,446	1,468	1,468	-
Center for Marine Education and Research (MS) (moved to MM & Sea Turtles)	2,865	2,957	-	-	-
Chesapeake Bay Studies	3,286	3,449	1,907	1,907	-
Climate Regimes & Ecosystem Productivity	1,433	1,478	1,500	2,000	500
Computer Hardware and Software – FY 2004 Omnibus Funded in PAC	(193)	3,335	3,383	3,383	-
Cooperative Research	18,964	19,173	9,494	9,494	-
Information Analyses & Dissemination	20,422	17,686	17,941	18,328	387
Magnuson –Stevens (MSA) Implementation off Alaska	6,859	7,018	7,120	7,120	-
Marine Resources Monitoring, Assessment & Prediction Program (MarMap)	1,194	1,232	850	850	-
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)	2,792	2,957	3,000	7,997	4,997
NMFS Facilities Maintenance	-4,297	-	4,000	4,000	-
Southeast Area Monitoring & Assessment Program (SEAMAP)	1,672	1,366	1,385	1,385	-
Other Projects	17,607	17,420	-	-	-
TOTAL	78,372	79,517	52,048	57,932	5,884
FTE	188	-	-	-	-

PROGRAM CHANGES FOR FY 2006:

Climate Regimes and Ecosystem Productivity (0 FTE and $500,000): NOAA requests an increase of $500,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $2,000,000 for Climate Regimes and Ecosystem Productivity. This increase would restore funding to the level in the FY 2005 Presidents Budget request. This funding would be used to improve the understanding and prediction of climate change on major U.S. marine and coastal ecosystems in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska. A significant aspect of NOAA's climate mission is to understand and predict the effects of climate change on coastal and marine systems. This initiative will study the effects of climate change on North Pacific coastal and marine ecosystems, their living marine resources, and human communities.

NMFS will utilize its expertise in biological oceanography and fisheries and pursue sociological studies on effects of climate change on fishing-dependent coastal communities. These targeted coastal and marine ecosystems are among the most productive in the world. They contain unique marine habitats that support large populations of commercially valuable finfish and shellfish, diverse populations of forage fishes, and abundant marine mammals and birds. These ecosystems also support economically important recreation and tourism.

Information Analysis and Dissemination (0 FTE and $387,000): NOAA requests an increase of $387,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $18,328,000 for Information Analysis and Dissemination. This increase would restore funding to the level in the FY 2005 Presidents Budget request. Funds within this line support mathematical and statistical analyses to integrate available data from resource surveys (funded under fisheries science and management), commercial and recreational data collections (funded under fish statistics), at-sea observers, and population biology studies (funded under fisheries science and technology base) into sophisticated population models. These analyses use models of population dynamics and risk assessments to formulate policy options for fisheries management. Data are analyzed and used in computer models to forecast changes in resource abundance required for long-range management. Output from models are disseminated to regional resource managers.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (0 FTE and $4,997,000): NOAA requests an increase of $4,997,000 and 0 FTE for a total of $7,997,000 to continue the important objective of improving NOAA's compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This increase would restore funding to the level in the FY 2005 Presidents Budget request. These funds would be used primarily for the following purposes.

- Provide support for NEPA specialists within regional and headquarters offices. Almost every regional office as well as headquarters continues to need additional NEPA specialists to accommodate our growing NEPA workload. The NEPA Coordinators frequently identify program actions that require new or more comprehensive NEPA analyses than have previously been conducted. Additionally, the Agency's ecosystem-based approaches to management will increase our need for NEPA expertise, given the analytical complexity of this management task. Because many of our financial assistance and permitting actions are frequently initiated by headquarters components, we continue to have an unmet need for more NEPA staff within these headquarters programs. Almost one-half of the requested funding will be allocated to meeting regional and headquarters staffing needs.

- Funding for the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils (FMC) for their assistance in implementing NEPA. By providing both fishery management expertise and staff assistance in the production of our NEPA documents, the FMCs play a major role in our implementation of NEPA. We would continue our traditional support of this FMC role with approximately 15 percent of the total requested funds.

- Expand and tailor our NEPA training program to all staff with NEPA implementation responsibilities. NOAA's NEPA program also offers a number of training courses for staff conducting NEPA analysis. Requested increases would also support contractors hired on a multi-year basis to assist in designing and conducting these courses. About eight percent of the requested funds may be allocated for these expanded training efforts.

- Obtain contractor support for the preparation of high priority complex environmental impact statements. About 27 percent of the requested funds will be used for EIS preparation.

TERMINATIONS FOR FY 2006:

The following programs, or portions thereof, have been terminated in FY 2006: Center for Marine Education and Research ($2,957,000); Chesapeake Bay Studies ($1,542,000); Cooperative Research ($9,679,000); Marine Resources Monitoring, Assessments and Prediction Program ($382,000); Other Projects ($17,420,000).

Exhibit 13

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
Contribution to the NOAA Strategic Planning Goals and Objectives
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

National Marine Fisheries Service	FY 2004 Actuals		FY 2005 Currently Available		FY 2006 Base Program		FY 2006 Estimate		Inc/Dec from Base	
	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount
Climate										
Climate	-	1,433	-	1,478	-	1,500	-	2,000	-	500
Total C	-	1,433	-	1,478	-	1,500	-	2,000	-	500
Ecosystems										
Ecosystems	2,790	619,908	2,609	675,037	2,552	570,796	2,587	623,464	35	52,668
Total ECO	2,790	619,908	2,609	675,037	2,552	570,796	2,587	623,464	35	52,668
Total National Marine Fisheries Service	2,790	621,341	2,609	676,515	2,552	572,296	2,587	625,464	35	53,168

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Exhibit 10

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE: DIRECT OBLIGATIONS
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service		FY 2004 Actuals Personnel	FY 2004 Actuals Amount	FY 2005 Currently Available Personnel	FY 2005 Currently Available Amount	FY 2006 Base Program Personnel	FY 2006 Base Program Amount	FY 2006 Estimate Personnel	FY 2006 Estimate Amount	Inc/Dec from Base Personnel	Inc/Dec from Base Amount
Protected Species Research and Management											
Protected Species	Pos/BA	723	145,118	723	175,530	723	131,491	737	159,273	14	27,782
	FTE/OBL	646	156,065	646	176,667	646	131,491	657	159,273	11	27,782
Total Protected Species Research and Management	Pos/BA	723	145,118	723	175,530	723	131,491	737	159,273	14	27,782
	FTE/OBL	646	156,065	646	176,667	646	131,491	657	159,273	11	27,782
Fisheries Research and Management											
Fish	Pos/BA	1,798	285,443	1,798	297,873	1,738	280,355	1,766	294,000	28	13,645
	FTE/OBL	1,482	294,955	1,482	303,112	1,422	280,355	1,444	294,000	22	13,645
Total Fisheries Research and Management	Pos/BA	1,798	285,443	1,798	297,873	1,738	280,355	1,766	294,000	28	13,645
	FTE/OBL	1,482	294,955	1,482	303,112	1,422	280,355	1,444	294,000	22	13,645
Enforcement and Observers / Training											
Enforcement	Pos/BA	248	47,307	248	45,824	248	47,744	248	54,171	-	6,427
	FTE/OBL	188	38,064	188	59,355	188	47,744	188	54,171	-	6,427
Observers & Training	Pos/BA	5	23,880	5	24,523	5	24,523	8	25,992	3	1,469
	FTE/OBL	61	21,316	61	27,535	61	24,523	63	25,992	2	1,469
Total Enforcement and Observers / Training	Pos/BA	253	71,187	253	70,347	253	72,267	256	80,163	3	7,896
	FTE/OBL	249	59,380	249	86,890	249	72,267	251	80,163	2	7,896

Exhibit 10

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE: DIRECT OBLIGATIONS
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

Habitat Conservation & Restoration											
Habitat Conservation	Pos/BA	107	41,221	107	53,248	111	36,135	111	34,096	-	(2,039)
	FTE/OBL	232	44,456	232	53,672	235	36,135	235	34,096	-	(2,039)
Total Habitat Conservation & Restoration	Pos/BA	107	41,221	107	53,248	111	36,135	111	34,096	-	(2,039)
	FTE/OBL	232	44,456	232	53,672	235	36,135	235	34,096	-	(2,039)
Other Activities Supporting Fisheries											
Other Activities Supporting Fisheries	Pos/BA	-	78,372	-	79,517	-	52,048	-	57,932	-	5,884
	FTE/OBL	188	78,629	-	82,856	-	52,048	-	57,932	-	5,884
Total Other Activities Supporting Fisheries	Pos/BA	-	78,372	-	79,517	-	52,048	-	57,932	-	5,884
	FTE/OBL	188	78,629	-	82,856	-	52,048	-	57,932	-	5,884

Exhibit 14

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE PERSONNEL DETAIL

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Enforcement and Observers / Training

Title			Grade	Number	Annual Salary	Total Salaries
Fish Biologists	AKC		7	1	38,907	38,907
Fish Biologists	NEC		7	1	39,539	39,539
Fish Biologists	SEC		7	1	39,049	39,049
Total				3		117,495
Less Lapse		25%		0		(29,374)
Total full-time permanent (FTE)				3		88,121
2005 Pay Adjustment (3.5%)						3,084
2006 Pay Adjustment (2.3%)						2,098
Total						93,303

Personnel Data	Number
Full-time permanent	2
Other than full-time permanent	0
Total	2
Authorized Positions	
Full-time permanent	3
Other than full-time permanent	0
Total	3

Exhibit 14

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE PERSONNEL DETAIL

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Fisheries Research and Management

Title		Grade	Number	Annual Salary	Total Salaries
Computer Specialist	HQ	14	1	96,572	96,572
Computer Specialist	HQ	12	1	68,722	68,722
Computer Specialist	HQ	9	1	47,390	47,390
Fish Management Specialist	AKA	14	1	93,430	93,430
Fish Management Specialist	NWR	14	1	98,561	98,561
Fish Management Specialist	NWR	14	1	96,985	96,985
Fish Management Specialist	PIR	14	1	93,430	93,430
Fish Management Specialist	SER	14	1	93,430	93,430
Fish Management Specialist	SWR	14	1	101,139	101,139
Fisheries Research Scientist	AKC	13	1	82,073	82,073
Fisheries Research Scientist	PIC	13	1	79,064	79,064
Fisheries Research Scientist	PIC	11	1	55,472	55,472
Fisheries Research Scientist	SEC	13	1	82,372	82,372
Fisheries Research Scientist	ST	13	1	81,723	81,723
Fisheries Research Scientist	SWC	13	1	82,814	82,814
Fisheries Research Scientist	SWC	11	1	58,103	58,103
Industry Economist	AKC	13	1	82,073	82,073
Industry Economist	NWC	13	2	82,073	164,146
Industry Economist	PIC	13	1	79,064	79,064
Industry Economist	SEC	13	1	82,372	82,372
Industry Economist	SWC	13	1	82,814	82,814
Information Tech Specalist	ST	13	1	81,723	81,723
Social Scientist	AKC	13	1	82,073	82,073
Social Scientist	NEC	13	1	83,406	83,406
Social Scientist	NWC	12	1	69,016	69,016
Fisheries Research Scientist	NEC	13	1	83,406	83,406
Fisheries Research Scientist	NWC	13	1	82,073	82,073

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE PERSONNEL DETAIL

Fisheries Research Scientist	NWC		11	1	57,583	57,583
Total				29		2,341,029
Less Lapse		25%		-7		(585,257)
Total full-time permanent (FTE)				22		1,755,772
2005 Pay Adjustment (3.5%)						61,452
2006 Pay Adjustment (2.3%)						41,796
Total						1,859,020

Personnel Data	Number
Full-time permanent	22
Other than full-time permanent	0
Total	22
Authorized Positions	
Full-time permanent	29
Total	29

Exhibit 14

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE PERSONNEL DETAIL

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Habitat Conservation & Restoration

Title			Grade	Number	Annual Salary	Total Salaries
Attorney	GLERL		13	1	84,354	84,354
Economist	GLERL		12	1	70,934	70,934
Fishery Biologist, Aquatic	GLERL		12	1	70,934	70,934
Program Coordinator	GLERL		13	1	84,354	84,354
Total				4		310,576
Less Lapse		25%		-1		(77,644)
Total full-time permanent (FTE)				3		232,932
2005 Pay Adjustment (3.5%)						8,153
2006 Pay Adjustment (2.3%)						5,545
Total						246,630

Personnel Data	Number
Full-time permanent	3
Other than full-time permanent	0
Total	3
Authorized Positions	
Full-time permanent	4
Other than full-time permanent	0
Total	4

Exhibit 14

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE PERSONNEL DETAIL

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Protected Species Research and Management

Title			Grade	Number	Annual Salary	Total Salaries
Fisheries Research Scientist	HQ		13	1	81,723	81,723
Fisheries Research Scientist	HQ		13	2	81,723	163,446
Fisheries Research Scientist	HQ		11	1	57,338	57,338
Fisheries Research Scientist	NEC		13	1	83,406	83,406
Fisheries Research Scientist	NWC		13	1	82,073	82,073
Fisheries Research Scientist	PIC		13	1	79,064	79,064
Fisheries Research Scientist	SEC		13	1	82,372	82,372
Fishery Biologist	HQ		13	1	81,723	81,723
Fishery Biologist	HQ		13	1	81,723	81,723
Fishery Biologist	NER		11	1	58,518	58,518
Fishery Biologist	SEC		13	1	82,372	82,372
Fishery Biologist	SER		11	1	55,472	55,472
Fishery Biologist	SWR		11	1	60,049	60,049
Fisheries Research Scientist	AKC		11	1	57,583	57,583
Total				15		1,106,862
Less Lapse		25%		-4		(276,716)
Total full-time permanent (FTE)				11		830,147
2005 Pay Adjustment (3.5%)						29,055
2006 Pay Adjustment (2.3%)						19,762
Total						878,963

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE PERSONNEL DETAIL

Personnel Data	Number
Full-time permanent	11
Other than full-time permanent	0
Total	11
Authorized Positions	
Full-time permanent	15
Total	15

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE DETAIL BY OBJECT CLASS
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Protected Species Research and Management

	Object Class	2006 Increase
11	Personnel compensation	
11.1	Full-time permanent	879
11.9	Total personnel compensation	879
12.1	Civilian personnel benefits	393
21	Travel and transportation of persons	118
23.3	Communications, utilities and miscellaneous charges	270
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	1,800
25.2	Other services	12,783
26	Supplies and materials	8
31	Equipment	30
41	Grants, subsides and contributions	11,501
99	Total Obligations	27,782

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE DETAIL BY OBJECT CLASS
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Fisheries Research and Management

	Object Class	2006 Increase
11	Personnel compensation	
11.1	Full-time permanent	1,859
11.9	Total personnel compensation	1,859
12.1	Civilian personnel benefits	877
21	Travel and transportation of persons	140
25.2	Other services	7,626
25.5	Research and development contracts	200
26	Supplies and materials	15
31	Equipment	58
41	Grants, subsides and contributions	2,870
99	Total Obligations	13,645

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE DETAIL BY OBJECT CLASS
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Enforcement and Observers / Training

	Object Class	2006 Increase
11	Personnel compensation	
11.1	Full-time permanent	93
11.9	Total personnel compensation	93
12.1	Civilian personnel benefits	42
21	Travel and transportation of persons	6
25.2	Other services	7,751
26	Supplies and materials	2
31	Equipment	2
99	Total Obligations	7,896

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE DETAIL BY OBJECT CLASS
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Habitat Conservation & Restoration

	Object Class	2006 Increase
11	Personnel compensation	
11.1	Full-time permanent	247
11.9	Total personnel compensation	247
12.1	Civilian personnel benefits	107
21	Travel and transportation of persons	8
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	175
25.2	Other services	503
25.3	Other purchases of goods and services from Govt accounts	250
26	Supplies and materials	2
31	Equipment	8
41	Grants, subsides and contributions	(3,339)
99	Total Obligations	(2,039)

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Operations Research and Facilities
PROGRAM CHANGE DETAIL BY OBJECT CLASS
(Dollar amounts in thousands)

Activity: National Marine Fisheries Service
Subactivity: Other Activities Supporting Fisheries

	Object Class	2006 Increase
25.2	Other services	4,884
41	Grants, subsides and contributions	1,000
99	Total Obligations	5,884

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